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Attorney Docket No. 108298352US

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2/12/03

By:



PATENT

## IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

IN RE APPLICATION OF: Peterson *et al.*

APPLICATION NO.: 09/420,659

FILED: 19 October 1999

FOR: METHODS AND APPARATUS FOR  
RETAINING A TRAY STACK HAVING A  
PLURALITY OF TRAYS FOR CARRYING  
MICROELECTRONIC DEVICES

EXAMINER: Janice L. Krizek

ART UNIT: 3652

CONF. NO: 3104

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Response

Assistant Commissioner for Patents  
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

The present communication responds to the Office action dated 13 Jan 2003 in the above-identified application. In that Office Action, the Examiner objected to the Amendment filed 2 October 2002 in this application as not being fully responsive to the 2 April 2002 Office Action because it failed to explain how new claims 64-77 distinguish from Nakamura.

New claim 64 calls for a machine having a tray retainer including first and second guides, a cross-member slidable with respect to the guides along a load/unload path, and a moveable retaining element. The retaining element is spaced a variable distance from the cross-member and is moveable between a storage position and a load/unload position. The machine also includes a receiving station that has a mounting element, which cooperates with the retainer to hold the retainer when the retaining element is in its load/unload position, yet release the retainer when the retaining element is in its storage position. The machine also includes a processing station.